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PART 5. LOAN SERVICE

51. General. Heads of custodial units are responsible for administering the loan of records to ensure that efficient service is furnished to Government agencies and that the records receive maximum protection. Records may not be loaned to private persons. Loans to non-Federal agencies or to non-governmental organizations require the written approval of the Archivist in accordance with the HB, NARS Administrative Procedures, 7-83 (NAR P 5410.2).

52. Receipt of loan requests. Loan requests are referred to the custodial unit having charge of the records involved. If a request involves the records of more than one unit, the unit that receives the original request makes all necessary referrals to other units. Requests for loans of records for exhibition purposes are referred to the Educational Programs Staff.

53. Approval of loans. Unit heads may approve or disapprove requests from Government agencies for the loan of records under their charge. Unit heads may delegate authority for approving routine loan requests but must personally approve or disapprove loans that are not clearly within the guidelines prescribed in this part.

54. Guidelines for loans. Use the guidelines set out in figure 5-54 to determine whether a request for the loan of records should be approved.

55. Responsibilities of the borrower. Agency representatives to whom loans are made must be informed of their responsibility for seeing that appropriate control is maintained and proper physical care is taken of the records loaned. The borrowing agency must not under any circumstances repair, alter, or add to the records loaned.

56. Length of loan. Determine the date due for each loan where practical, after consultation with the borrower; otherwise the staff member approving the loan may approve a loan period not exceeding 1 month. The maximum period for which a loan will be made or extended at any one time is 6 months. When any extension of a loan is arranged, note the change on the loan receipt.

57. Preparing records for loan. Keep a record of each loan on ^{N/A} ~~GSA~~ Form 6770, Loan Receipt. Records to be loaned should be packed and addressed by the custodial unit making the loan, and sufficient identification should be attached to facilitate the return of the records to NARS and to the unit where they belong. ^{N/A} ~~GSA~~ Form 6770, Loan Tag, is available for this purpose and should be marked to show the unit symbol. The loan tag may be fastened to the records in any suitable manner.

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- a. Records are loaned only in exceptional cases. Usually records are loaned only to the agency of origin or its successor. Loans to other agencies will be made only with the approval of the originating or successor agency.
- b. Records are loaned only if the request is made by a responsible official of the agency, preferably the agency records officer or specific persons designated by the agency itself to make such requests.
- c. Records are loaned for official purposes only.
- d. Records are not loaned for the use of other agencies in providing inquirers with information that would normally be provided directly by NARS.
- e. Records are not loaned when there is a need to have them readily available for use by agencies or researchers other than the borrowing agency.
- f. Government agencies should be encouraged to substitute research room use, or to accept reproductions of the records in place of the loan of original records, whenever circumstances, including the cost to NARS, make such action advisable.
- g. Large bodies of records should not be loaned when specific identifiable documents or files would serve equally well. If large quantities of records are required by the agency, all possible means of having the records used in the building in which they are stored should be explored before the loan is approved.
- h. The value of the information in the records and the extent of the loss that would result from their injury or destruction should be weighed against the prospective borrower's needs. There are many documents that due to their age or great intrinsic value should not be removed from their assigned depository unless special measures for their safety are taken.
- i. Records in poor physical condition are not to be loaned until they have been repaired.
- j. Consideration should be given to the probable conditions of handling and use of the records in the borrowing agency and to the degree of assurance that the records will be returned. Loans should be made more readily to agencies that have in the past handled records carefully and returned them punctually than to those agencies that have been careless in such matters. Special precautions must be taken to ensure the return of records loaned to agencies whose temporary functions are apt to be suddenly discontinued or whose organizations are apt to be hastily liquidated.

Figure 5-54. Loan Guidelines

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58. Delivery of records to borrower.

a. By NARS. Upon request, NATH delivers records to Government offices in the Washington, DC area, and Federal records center personnel deliver records to Government offices in other cities. Loan receipts signed by the authorized representatives of the borrowing agencies are returned to the custodial unit as each trip is completed.

b. By borrowing agency. At the discretion of the unit head, a Government official or messenger from a borrowing agency may take records from the building in which they are stored after signing the loan receipt.

c. By mail or express. Send records to be transmitted by mail or express to the mail room. Records transmitted by mail should be registered; those transmitted by express are sent at the expense of the borrower.

59. Return of records.

a. Upon request, NATH or the Federal records center delivery service picks up borrowed records when an agency is ready to return them. Agencies should be discouraged from using their own messengers or the mail for returning records.

b. If records other than those loaned are received in a custodial unit, the unit head returns them to the agency or arranges to have them accessioned.

c. Borrowed records must be carefully checked against the loan receipts as soon as they are returned. Notify the borrowing agency of any missing records. Inform NN of any record still missing after a reasonable time.

60. Overdue loans. The head of each custodial unit is responsible for obtaining the return of overdue loaned records that belong in his custody. Each unit should check its record of outstanding loans at least once each quarter, notify borrowing agencies of each item overdue, and request the immediate return of any item for which an extension of the loan is not advisable. GSA Form 7081, Request for Overdue Records, may be used for this purpose.